

REMARKS

Summary

Prior to entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 1 and 37-66 were pending in the present application with Claims 37, 65 and 66 being independent claims and the remaining claims (Claims 38-64) being dependent claims. Claims 1, 46 and 55 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 37-40, 42-45, 47, 49, 51-52, 54, 56, 58 and 60-66 have been amended without adding new matter. Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 37-45, 47-54 and 56-66 are pending with Claims 37, 65 and 66 being independent claims and Claims 38-45, 47-54 and 56-64 being dependent claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of Claims 37-45, 47-54 and 56-66 in view of the amendments above and the remarks below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 37-66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,016,362) (hereinafter, "Kato et al."), and further in view of Takanashi et al. (U.E. Patent No. 6,313,923) (hereinafter, "Takanashi et al.").

The Takanashi et al. reference discloses, as shown in Fig. 9, fixing a displayed size of a trimming frame 232 with respect to images before and after magnification or reduction (namely, the ratio to the whole image varies) when the magnification or reduction is performed for a single image by an instruction of a user.

In Claim 37 of the present application, the trimming area is determined for two images (a first image and a second image) from among continuous plural images and the trimming areas for the remaining images between these two images are calculated so as to gradually change between the two determined trimming areas. More specifically, as shown in Fig. 13, the trimming areas for the remaining images (n-TH image in Fig. 13) are calculated so as to gradually

change from one of the trimming areas (e.g., a cut out area of 1st in Fig. 13) determined by the trimming area determination means to the other of the trimming areas (e.g., a cut out area of N-TH in Fig. 13). By this structure, even if the continuous plural images have less motion, it becomes possible to generate continuous still images having pseudo motion such as pan/tilt/zoom effects with an interesting effect.

On the other hand, as the Examiner admits in the outstanding office action, neither the Kato et al. nor the Owens et al. reference teaches or suggests determining the trimming area with adding a change from a part of an area selected by a user with respect to the images other than the images of which trimming areas are selected by the user.

Further, the Takanashi et al. reference discloses to set the trimming frame for a single image and it does not teach or suggest setting the trimming areas for the continuous plural images as in Claim 37 of the present application. If it is assumed that a process from Fig. 9(a) to Fig. 9(b) of the Takanashi et al. reference suggests that based on a trimming area of a certain image, trimming areas of the remaining images are automatically set, what the Takanashi et al. reference suggests is merely that based on one trimming frame set for one image (before magnification), a trimming frame for another image (after magnification) is set. That is, the Takanashi et al. reference does not teach or suggest calculating, based on the trimming areas of two images, the trimming areas of the remaining images between these two images. Therefore, in the Takanashi et al. reference, it is not possible to set the trimming areas of the remaining images so that they gradually changes from one trimming area to the other trimming area of the two determined trimming areas. For this reason, it is not possible to generate continuous still images having pseudo motion such as pan/tilt/zoom effects. Therefore, the trimming area calculation unit of Claim 37 is not obvious from the Takanashi et al. reference.

As explained above, none of the Kato et al. reference, the Owens et al. reference and the Takanashi et al. reference teaches or suggests the trimming area calculation unit of Claim 37, and even if these references are combined in

any manner, Claim 37 is not rendered obvious from the combination. Accordingly, Claim 37 is believed allowable and Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 37.

Independent Claims 65 and 66 include similar limitations to Claim 37 and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 37. Accordingly, Claims 65 and 66 are believed allowable and Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of Claims 65 and 66.

The remaining claims (i.e., Claims 38-45, 47-54 and 56-64) are dependent claims. As discussed above, all of the independent claims are believed allowable. Therefore, the dependent claims are also believed allowable because they depend from an allowable base claim. Furthermore, each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, and individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

All of the Pending Claims are Allowable

As described above, the cited references, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the features of any of the claims in the present application. The cited references do not render the claims obvious. Furthermore, all of the amendments to the claims are supported by the specification and no new matter has been added. For example, see Fig. 5A (step S149), Fig. 5B (steps S201-216), Fig. 11, Fig. 13A, Fig. 13 B and Fig. 14 and the accompanying text in the specification.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims pending in the application meet the requirements for patentability and respectfully request that the Examiner indicate the allowance of such claims.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this response which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon prior

art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

If any additional fee is required, please charge Deposit Account Number 502456.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner may contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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/Marlene Klein/

Date

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